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NASA Policy Directive

NPD 8900.3HEffective Date: August 16,
2011Expiration Date: August 16,
2016**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**[Printable Format \(PDF\)](#)

Request Notification of Change

(NASA Only)

Subject: Astronaut Medical and Dental Observation Study and Care Program

Responsible Office: Office of the Chief Health & Medical Officer

1. POLICY

The following shall be NASA's policy regarding the medical and dental care of the astronaut corps:

a. The immediate and long-term responsibilities of NASA with regard to the human space flight program require that the Agency provide medical and dental care, observation, and study to astronauts, payload specialists, and other space flight participants while they are on active duty with NASA. Biomedical evidence from clinical and research observations conducted during and following space flight indicates astronauts are at higher risk for some specifically identified medical problems, for example, intracranial hypertension, loss of visual acuity, accelerated osteoporosis, and injuries related to space suit operations. Our findings are evolving as we gain more insight into how humans are affected by space flight. To provide adequate health care and monitoring, astronauts will be offered full medical care for space flight-identified health care issues. This care, observation (to include health monitoring), and study will be provided, utilizing the best current guidelines for the clinical practice of medicine and dentistry, and will be comprehensive in scope, as applicable, to the NASA mission. It will encompass all aspects related to the mission, including certification and training, and will include all space flight mission phases (pre-, in-, and post-flight). It will also provide a program of longitudinal health study, including current and retired astronauts, payload specialists, and other space flight participants.

b. The health of family members of those crewmembers who remain eligible for space flight assignment is of critical importance, and factors such as infectious disease and stress affecting a crewmember's family may have serious adverse effects on the crewmember's health and performance, as well as the health and performance of other crewmembers. Limited outpatient medical care on a diagnosis and referral basis will be provided by Johnson Space Center (JSC) onsite flight medicine clinics to the

crewmember's immediate family, as long as the crewmember is eligible for assignment to a space flight mission.

c. Medical and dental insurance are available for current or active duty United States (U.S.) astronauts, payload specialists, and other space flight participants. NASA will pay for health care costs of crewmembers eligible for space flight assignment not covered under the individual's insurance plan when the individual is referred by a NASA medical or dental officer and the referral is required for space flight eligibility.

d. Consistent with agreements between NASA and the International Partners, NASA will provide astronauts and payload specialists from the international community, while they are on active duty and eligible for space flight assignment in the U.S., the same level of medical care, observation, and study provided to the U.S. astronauts and payload specialists.

e. Astronauts, payload specialists, and other space flight participants may voluntarily participate as subjects in biomedical research during space flight missions, provided their participation is supervised by a NASA physician and the research complies with and is in accordance with NPD 7100.8D, Protection of Human Research Subjects. All human experimental and research data records and health information management system records compiled, pursuant to this NPD, are subject to 5 U.S.C. 552a Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, and NPR 1382.1, NASA Privacy Procedural Requirements.

2. APPLICABILITY

This NPD is applicable to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities and Technical and Service Support Centers.

3. AUTHORITY

- a. The National Aeronautics and Space Act, as amended, 51 U.S.C. 20113(a).
- b. Health Service Programs, 5 U.S.C. 7901.

4. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

- a. Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, 5 U.S.C. 552a.
- b. NPD 7100.8D, Protection of Human Research Subjects.
- c. NPR 1382.1, NASA Privacy Procedural Requirements.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

- a. The Chief Health and Medical Officer (CHMO) is responsible for coordination and overall monitoring of this NPD, to include conducting periodic reviews of its implementation.
- b. The Associate Administrator (AA), Space Operations Mission Directorate, is responsible for ensuring that this NPD is implemented and that necessary status reports will be provided to the CHMO and will include the data in support of the metrics outlined in Section 7. Measurements.
- c. The NASA Medical Policy Board is responsible for providing policy guidance regarding this program and for any recommendations regarding changes to this NPD to the NASA

CHMO.

d. The Center Director, JSC, is responsible for developing and implementing an Astronaut Medical and Dental Care, Observation, and Study Program consistent with the policies set forth in this NPD.

e. Directors of other NASA Centers and other NASA officials shall provide support to this program as required.

6. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

None.

7. MEASUREMENT/VERFICIATION

a. METRIC: The percentage of NASA Centers responding positively to survey questions.

(1) The CHMO shall conduct an annual survey of the health care delivery systems of each Center responsible for astronaut medical care to ascertain whether appropriate Center personnel are cognizant of this NPD and an implementation plan is in place. The higher the percentage of compliance, the greater the success of the program.

b. METRIC: The percentage of active duty U.S astronauts, payload specialists, and other space flight participants with medical and dental insurance. The AA,Space Operations Mission Directorate, and Director, Space and Life Sciences, at JSC, shall conduct an annual survey to ascertain the medical and dental insurance status of each active duty astronaut and payload specialist. The higher the percentage of active duty astronauts and payload specialists with medical and dental insurance, the greater the success of the program.

c. METRIC: The number of retired astronauts who receive an annual physical examination as part of the Lifetime Surveillance of Astronaut Health (LSAH) Program as compared to the total number of retired astronauts available, expressed as a percentage.

(1) The CHMO will conduct an annual assessment of the LSAH to identify the percentage of retired astronauts who receive an annual physical examination as compared to the total number of retired astronauts. The higher the percentage of retired astronauts receiving an annual physical examination, the greater the success of the program.

8. CANCELLATION

NPD 8900.3G, Astronaut Medical and Dental Observation Study and Care Program, dated January 8, 2003.

/s/ Charles F. Bolden, Jr.
Administrator

ATTACHMENT A: (TEXT)

A.1 5 U.S.C. 552a, Privacy Act of 1974, as amended.

A.2 Protection of Human Subjects, 14 CFR Part 1230 and 45 CFR Part 46.

A.3 NPD 1440.6, NASA Records Management.

A.4 NPD 1800.2, NASA Occupational Health Program.

A.5 NPD 8710.1, Emergency Preparedness Program.

A.6 NPD 8900.1, Medical Operations Responsibilities in Support of Human Space Flight Programs.

A.7 NPD 8900.5, NASA Health and Medical Policy for Human Space Exploration.

A.8 NPR 1441.1, NASA Records Retention Schedules.

A.9 NPR 8715.2, NASA Emergency Preparedness Procedural Requirements.

A.10 NPR 8715.3, NASA General Safety Program Requirements.

A.11 NPR 8900.1, Health and Medical Requirements for Human Space Exploration.

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